



**Public Hearing Testimony to  
The Appropriations Committee, Connecticut General Assembly**

**RE: Governor's Budget Bill**

**Submitted by: Peter DeBiasi**

*February 27, 2014*

Members of the Appropriations Committee, my name is Peter DeBiasi, and I am the President/CEO The Access Community Action Agency, which works to empower people in northeast CT to achieve and sustain economic stability.

I strongly urge you to **restore the \$3.4M Human Services Infrastructure (HSI) Community Action Program line to the Department of Social Services budget.**

**Residents in all 169 towns in CT benefit from the services that these funds support.** Last year, an average of **over 1,000 CT residents per day benefited.** In northeast Connecticut alone, 20,000 individuals will be negatively impacted if this cut is allowed to stand.

The Community Action HSI delivery model, funded with these funds allows our customers to receive a hand-up, not a hand-out. These funds provide services that assess their needs and find ways to link them to the most effective bundle of resources that will empower them to move toward and/or sustain economic stability. That's good for them and good for the whole community.

**HSI is an investment in our people and communities that pays dividends** by helping strengthen families, allowing them to engage in and contribute to the economic life of their communities. **Not making this investment will needlessly cause families and communities to suffer, and cost CT money.** In fact, a **\$3.4M cut will cost Connecticut nearly \$5M** because of lost federal matching funds.

HSI funds also provide important leverage for other funding. As mentioned in other testimony, **for every \$1 of HSI funds, almost \$100 is leveraged** to support Connecticut families and communities.

Now is not the time to abandon those who are in need, and striving to achieve and sustain economic stability. **Restore the full \$3.4M HSI line in the DSS budget.**

**It strongly urge you to take the action necessary to achieve this outcome.**

Thank you in advance for your serious consideration of this vital request.